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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 14, 2013**

**Bad River Watershed Association opposed to changes of the Water Resources Act NR 115**

Wisconsin's Water Resources Act, also known as NR 115 was enacted in 1966 to protect the public waters that our citizens count on every day for life, work and recreation. This novel approach to pollution control provides state wide guidelines for county zoning in order to address indirect pollution sources.

After cooperative planning and much careful consideration, the shoreland zoning rule in NR 115 was updated in 2009 with support from the Wisconsin Builders Association, environmental organizations and the Wisconsin Realtors Association. Now the WI DNR Board is proposing changes that would more than double the amount of shore that may be developed with impervious surfaces and reduce the amount of land that must conform to these regulations. Impervious surfaces collect and unnaturally concentrate precipitation runoff, greatly amplifying the effects of pollutants and suspended matter on lakes and streams. The proposed changes would also allow for greater expansion of existing structures that do not conform to current zoning regulations.

The Bad River Watershed Association opposes these changes and encourages the DNR Board to leave the recently revised rules in place. Impervious surfaces such as roofs and blacktop increase the amount of run-off; which carries pollutants such as fertilizers, road salt, and oil from vehicles into our lakes and rivers. The greater the percentage of land covered by these surfaces, the greater the impact on our water. These large allowances for shore development impact both the aesthetic value of our land and the health of our rivers and lakes.

The complete draft rule can be found on-line at

<https://health.wisconsin.gov/admrules/public/Rmo?nRmold=12624>.

Hearings will be held from 2-6pm at the following locations:

- Aug. 15, Spooner – Spooner High School, 801 County Road A.
- Aug. 22, Tomahawk – Rodeway Inn & Suites, 1738 Comfort Dr.

Written comments can be sent by mail to: Bureau of Watershed Management P.O. Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707 or by email to [DNRNR115COMMENTS@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRNR115COMMENTS@wisconsin.gov). Comments may be submitted until September 5, 2013.

The Bad River Watershed Association is headquartered in Ashland, Wis. Founded in 2002, BRWA works to promote a healthy relationship between the people and natural communities of the Bad River watershed by involving all citizens in assessing, maintaining and improving watershed integrity for future generations. More information about the Bad River Watershed Association is available at [www.badriverwatershed.org](http://www.badriverwatershed.org).

We hope that Wisconsin citizens will take an active role in communicating their opinion on these significant changes to the regulations that protect our waters.

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